

# 14 C.F.R. PART 234—AIRLINE SERVICE QUALITY PERFORMANCE REPORTS

## Title 14 - Aeronautics and Space

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### PART 234—AIRLINE SERVICE QUALITY PERFORMANCE REPORTS

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**Authority:** 49 U.S.C. 329 and chapters 401 and 417.

**Source:** Amdt. No. 234-1, 52 FR 34071, Sept. 9, 1987, unless otherwise noted.

Note: The reporting requirements contained in this part have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 2138-0041.

### § 234.1 Purpose.

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The purpose of this part is to set forth required data that certain air carriers must submit to the Department and to computer reservations system vendors in computerized form, except as otherwise provided, so that information on air carriers' quality of service can be made available to consumers of air transportation. This part also requires that service quality data be disclosed directly to consumers.

### § 234.2 Definitions.

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For the purpose of this part:

*Cancelled flight* means a flight operation that was not operated, but was listed in a carrier's computer reservation system within seven calendar days of the scheduled departure.

*Discontinued flight* means a flight dropped from a carrier's computer reservation system more than seven calendar days before its scheduled departure.

*Diverted flight* means a flight which is operated from the scheduled origin point to a point other than the scheduled destination point in the carrier's published schedule. For example, a carrier has a published schedule for a flight from A to B to C. If the carrier were to actually fly an A to C operation, the A to B segment is a diverted flight, and the B to C segment is a cancelled flight.

*Extra-section flight* means a flight conducted as an integral part of scheduled passenger service, that has not been provided for in published schedules and is required for transportation of traffic that cannot be accommodated on the regularly scheduled flight.

*Flight* means any nonstop scheduled passenger flight segment with a specific flight number scheduled to be operated pursuant to a published schedule within a specific origin-destination city pair, other than transborder or foreign air transportation. In the case of reporting to computer reservations system vendors, *flight* also means one-stop

or multi-stop single plane scheduled operations that include any flight segments for which performance is reported pursuant to this part.

*Late or late flight* means a flight that arrives at the gate 15 minutes or more after its published arrival time.

*Mishandled-baggage report* means a report filed with a carrier by or on behalf of a passenger that claims loss, delay, damage or pilferage of baggage.

*New flight* means a flight added to a carrier's schedule to operate in a specific origin-destination city pair and not scheduled to depart within 30 minutes of any discontinued flight that was contained in the carrier's published schedules for the same city pair during the previous month.

*On-time* means a flight that arrives less than 15 minutes after its published arrival time.

*On-time performance* means the percentage of scheduled operations of a specific flight that an air carrier operates on-time during a month.

*On-time performance code* means a single character determined in accordance with the provisions of this part that reflects the monthly on-time performance of certain nonstop flights and single plane one-stop or multi-stop flights, the schedule and availability of which are listed in a computer reservation system (CRS) regulated by 14 CFR part 255.

*Reportable flight* means any nonstop flight, including a mechanically delayed flight, to or from any airport within the contiguous 48 states that accounts for at least 1 percent of domestic scheduled-passenger enplanements in the previous calendar year, as reported to the Department pursuant to part 241 of this title. Qualifying airports will be specified periodically in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Office of Airline Information.

*Reporting carrier* means an air carrier certificated under 49 U.S.C. 41102 that accounted for at least 1 percent of domestic scheduled-passenger revenues in the 12 months ending March 31 of each year, as reported to the Department pursuant to part 241 of this title. Reporting carriers will be identified periodically in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Office of Airline Information.

*Wet-leased flight* means a flight operated with a leased aircraft and crew.

[Amdt. 234–1, 52 FR 34071, Sept. 9, 1987, as amended by Docket No. 48524, 59 FR 49797, Sept. 30, 1994; 60 FR 66722, Dec. 26, 1995]

### **§ 234.3 Applicability.**

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This part applies to certain domestic scheduled passenger flights that are held out to the public by certificated air carriers that account for at least 1 percent of domestic scheduled passenger revenues. Certain provisions also apply to voluntary reporting to on-time performance by carriers.

### **§ 234.4 Reporting of on-time performance.**

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(a) Each reporting carrier shall file BTS Form 234 “On-Time Flight Performance Report” with the Office of Airline Information on a monthly basis, setting forth the information for each of its reportable flights held out in the *Official Airline Guide* (OAG), in the computer reservations systems (CRS), or in other schedule publications. The reportable flights include, but are not limited to, cancelled flights, mechanically cancelled flights, diverted flights, new flights and wet-leased flights. The report shall be made in the form and manner set forth in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Director, Office of Airline Statistics, and shall contain the following information:

- (1) Carrier and flight number.
- (2) Aircraft tail number.
- (3) Origin and Destination airport codes.
- (4) Published OAG departure and arrival times for each scheduled operation of the flight.
- (5) CRS scheduled arrival and departure time for each scheduled operation of the flight.
- (6) Actual departure and arrival time for each operation of the flight.
- (7) Difference in minutes between OAG and CRS scheduled arrival times.

- (8) Difference in minutes between OAG and CRS scheduled departure times.
  - (9) Actual wheels-off and wheels-on times for each operation of the flight.
  - (10) Date and day of week of scheduled flight operation.
  - (11) Scheduled elapsed time, according to CRS schedule.
  - (12) Actual elapsed time.
  - (13) Amount of departure delay, if any.
  - (14) Amount of arrival delay, if any.
  - (15) Amount of elapsed time difference, if any.
  - (16) Causal code for cancellation, if any.
  - (17) Minutes of delay attributed to the air carrier, if any.
  - (18) Minutes of delay attributed to extreme weather, if any.
  - (19) Minutes of delay attributed to the national aviation system, if any.
  - (20) Minutes of delay attributed to security, if any.
  - (21) Minutes of delay attributed to a previous late arriving aircraft, if any.
- (b) When reporting the information specified in paragraph (a) of this section for a diverted flight, a reporting carrier shall use the original scheduled flight number and the original scheduled origin and destination airport codes. Carriers are not required to report causal information for diverted flights.
- (c) A reporting carrier shall report the information specified in paragraph (a) of this section for a new flight beginning with the first day of the new scheduled operation.
- (d) A reporting carrier shall not report the information specified in paragraph (a) of this section for any discontinued or extra-section flight.
- (e) Actual arrival, departure and elapsed times shall be measured by the times at which the aircraft arrived at and departed from the gate or passenger loading area.

(f) The published arrival time and departure time of a flight shall be, respectively, the scheduled arrival and departure times in effect on the date of the scheduled operation of the flight, as shown in the most recent *Official Airline Guide*, and in computer reservations systems. Each carrier shall designate a single computer reservations system in addition to the *Official Airline Guide* as the sources of scheduled arrival time and departure time data in its reports to the Department and shall report the scheduled arrival times and departure times listed in those sources for each flight. Scheduled elapsed times, amount of departure and/or arrival delay, and elapsed time difference shall be calculated using the scheduled times shown in the designated CRS source.

(g) Reporting carriers should use the following codes to identify causes for cancelled flights:

Code

A—Air Carrier

B—Extreme Weather

C—National Aviation System (NAS).

D—Security

(1) Air Carrier cancellations are due to circumstances that were within the control of the air carrier (*e.g.*, lack of flight crew, maintenance, etc.).

(2) Extreme weather cancellations are caused by weather conditions (*e.g.*, significant meteorological conditions), actual or forecasted at the point of departure, en route, or point of arrival that, in accordance with applicable regulatory standards and/or in the judgment of the air carrier, prevents operation of that flight and/or prevents operations of subsequent flights due to the intended aircraft being out of position as a result of a prior cancellation or delay attributable to weather.

(3) NAS cancellations are caused by circumstances within the National Aviation System. This term is used to refer to a broad set of conditions: weather-non-extreme, airport operations, heavy traffic volume, air traffic control, etc.

(4) Security cancellations may be the result of malfunctioning screening or other security equipment or a breach of security that causes the evacuation of the airport or individual concourses, or the need to re-screen passengers.

(h) Reporting carriers should use the following causes to identify the reasons for delayed flights:

CAUSE

Air Carrier

Extreme weather

NAS

Security

Late arriving aircraft

(1) Air carrier delays are due to circumstances within the control of the air carrier.

(2) Extreme weather delays are caused by weather conditions (*e.g.*, significant meteorological conditions, actual or forecasted at the point of departure, en route, or point of arrival that, in accordance with applicable regulatory standards and/or in the judgment of the air carrier, prevents operation of that flight and/or prevents operations of subsequent flights due to the intended aircraft being out of position as a result of a prior cancellation or delay attributable to weather.

(3) NAS delays are caused by circumstances within the National Aviation System. This term is used to refer to a broad set of conditions: weather-non-extreme, airport operations, heavy traffic volume, air traffic control, etc.

(4) Security delays may be the result of malfunctioning screening or other security equipment or a breach of security that causes the evacuation of the airport or individual concourses or the need to re-screen passengers.

(5) Late arriving aircraft delays are the result of a late incoming aircraft from the previous flight.

(i) When reporting causal codes in paragraph (a) of this section, reporting carriers are required to code delays only when the arrival delay is 15 minutes or greater; and reporting carriers must report each causal component of the reportable delay when the causal component is 5 minutes or greater.

[Amdt. 234-1, 52 FR 34071, Sept. 9, 1987, as amended by Docket No. 48524, 59 FR 49797, Sept. 30, 1994; 60 FR 66722, Dec. 26, 1995; 67 FR 70544, Nov. 25, 2002]

### **§ 234.5 Form of reports.**

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Except where otherwise noted, all reports required by this part shall be filed within 15 days of the end of the month for which data are reported. The reports must be submitted to the Office of Airline Information in a format specified in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics' Assistant Director for Airline Information.

[Docket No. OST–2000–8164, 67 FR 70545, Nov. 25, 2002]

### **§ 234.6 Baggage-handling statistics.**

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Each reporting carrier shall report monthly to the Department on a domestic system basis, excluding charter flights, the total number of passengers enplaned systemwide, and the total number of mishandled-baggage reports filed with the carrier. The information shall be submitted to the Department within 15 days of the end of the month to which the information applies and must be submitted with the transmittal letter accompanying the data for on-time performance in the form and manner set forth in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Director, Office of Airline Information.

[Docket No. 48524, 59 FR 49798, Sept. 30, 1994, as amended at 60 FR 66722, Dec. 26, 1995]

### **§ 234.7 Voluntary reporting.**

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(a) In addition to the data for each reportable flight required to be reported by this part, a reporting carrier may report to DOT for every other nonstop domestic flight that it schedules, the reportable flight data specified in this part.

(b) Any air carrier that is not a reporting carrier may file the data specified in this part for every reportable flight that it schedules, or for every nonstop domestic flight that it

schedules.

(c) Voluntary reports containing information not required to be filed (1) must be submitted in the same form and manner, and at the same time, as reports containing data required to be filed, and (2) must be accompanied by a written statement describing in detail the information that is being voluntarily submitted. A carrier that files a voluntary report must continue to do so for a period of not less than 12 consecutive months.

### **§ 234.8 Calculation of on-time performance codes.**

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(a) Each reporting carrier shall calculate an on-time performance code in accordance with this section and as provided in more detail in accounting and reporting directives issued by the Director, Office of Airline Information. The calculations shall be performed for each reportable flight, except those scheduled to operate three times or less during a month. In addition, each reporting carrier shall assign an on-time performance code to each of its single plane one-stop or multi-stop flights, or portion thereof, that the carrier holds out to the public through a CRS, the last segment of which is a reportable flight.

(b) The on-time performance code shall be calculated as follows:

(1) Based on reportable flight data provided to the Department, calculate the percentage of on-time arrivals of each nonstop flight. Calculations shall not include discontinued or extra-section flights for which data are not reported to the Department.

(2) Based upon the on-time performance percentage calculated in paragraph (b)(1) of this section, assign a single digit code to each flight that reflects the percentile of on-time performance achieved by the flight, as set forth in the following table:

On Time Performance-----

(3) For a one-stop or multi-stop flight, or portion thereof, listed in a CRS, the performance code for the nonstop flight segment arriving at the destination listed in the CRS shall be used.

(4) In the case of a new flight, carriers shall assign a performance code consisting of the letter “N.” A flight that is not a new flight shall be assigned the performance code calculated for the flight that it replaces, even if the two flights do not have the same flight number. In the case of a flight scheduled to operate three times or less during a month, carriers shall assign a performance code consisting of the letter “U.”

(c) Carriers shall calculate on-time performance percentages and assign on-time performance codes on a monthly basis. This process shall be completed no later than the 15th day of each month, when the reports required by this part are due to the Department, and the codes shall reflect the previous month's operations.

[Amdt. No. 234–1, 52 FR 34071, Sept. 9, 1987, as amended by Amdt. No. 234–3, 52 FR 48397, Dec. 22, 1987; 53 FR 27677, July 22, 1988; Docket No. 48524, 59 FR 49798, Sept. 30, 1994; 60 FR 66722, Dec. 26, 1995]

### **§ 234.9 Reporting of on-time performance codes.**

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No later than the 15th day of each month, each reporting carrier shall deliver, or arrange to have delivered, to each system vendor, as defined in 14 CFR part 255, the on-time performance codes required to be determined above. Carriers may report the codes by insuring that they are included in basic schedule tapes provided to CRS vendors or by providing a separate tape that will permit the CRS vendors to match the performance codes with basic schedule tapes.

### **§ 234.10 Voluntary disclosure of on-time performance codes.**

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(a) Any air carrier may determine, in accordance with the provisions of §234.8 of this part, the on-time performance codes for the flights for which it voluntarily provides flight information to the Department pursuant to §234.7 of this part.

(b) A carrier may supply these additional on-time performance codes to system vendors at the same time and in the same manner as the required disclosures are

made to system vendors, provided that voluntary disclosures must continue for a period of not less than 12 consecutive months, and must be supplied either

(1) For each of the carrier's reportable flights and each of its single plane one-stop or multi-stop flights, or portions thereof, that it holds out to the public through a CRS, the last segment of which is a reportable flight or

(2) For each of the carrier's domestic flights.

### **§ 234.11 Disclosure to consumers.**

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During the course of reservations or ticketing discussions or transactions, or inquiries about flights, between a carrier's employees and the public, the carrier shall disclose upon reasonable request the on-time performance code for any flight that has been assigned a code pursuant to this part.

### **§ 234.12 Waivers.**

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Any carrier may request a waiver from the reporting requirements of this part. Such a request, at the discretion of the Director, Bureau of Transportation Statistics may be granted for good cause shown. The requesting party shall state the basis for such a waiver.

[Docket No. 48524, 59 FR 49798, Sept. 30, 1994, as amended at 60 FR 66722, Dec. 26, 1995]

### **§ 234.13 Reports by air carriers on incidents involving animals during air transport.**

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(a) Any air carrier that provides scheduled passenger air transportation shall, within 15 days of the end of the month to which the information applies, submit to the United States Department of Transportation's Aviation Consumer Protection

Division a report on any incidents involving the loss, injury, or death of an animal during air transport provided by the air carrier.

(b) The report shall be made in the form and manner set forth in reporting directives issued by the Deputy General Counsel for the U.S. Department of Transportation and shall contain the following information:

- (1) Carrier and flight number;
- (2) Date and time of the incident;
- (3) Description of the animal, including name, if applicable;
- (4) Identification of the owner(s) and/or guardian of the animal;
- (5) Narrative description of the incident;
- (6) Narrative description of the cause of the incident;
- (7) Narrative description of any corrective action taken in response to the incident;  
and
- (8) Name, title, address, and telephone number of the individual filing the report on behalf of the air carrier.

(c) For purposes of this section:

- (1) The air transport of an animal includes the entire period during which an animal is in the custody of an air carrier, from check-in of the animal prior to departure until the animal is returned to the owner or guardian of the animal at the final destination of the animal; and
- (2) Animal means any warm or cold blooded animal which, at the time of transportation, is being kept as a pet in a family household in the United States.

[Docket No. OST-2005-20331, 70 FR 7394, Feb. 14, 2005]

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